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Northern Artists

An Arts Council exhibition

Northern Artists

City Art Gallery Manchester	July 16 - August 7
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Arts Council of Great Britain

1960

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Foreword

The northern counties of England have in the past produced artists as varied in their talents as Romney, Stubbs, Martin, Chantrey and Frith. Hogarth was himself of northern parentage, while distinguished minor figures from Francis Place in landscape to the successive members of the Devis family in portraiture attracted generations of patrons both near and far from their places of birth.

In spite of this distinguished ancestry it is doubtful whether the contribution of the north to English art has ever been more rich and varied than it is today, and the Arts Council is grateful to the artists and collectors whose works, now on show, demonstrate this so clearly. Our thanks are especially due to Mr S. D. Cleveland, Director of the City Art Gallery, Manchester, who first proposed the exhibition. The selection and cataloguing of the works was done by Mr J. Wood Palmer.

G.W.

Introduction

BY J. WOOD PALMER

It is often a source of astonishment to foreigners accustomed to living in very much larger countries than our own, that an area as small as England should be so fiercely divided, in spirit at least, into regions with all the concomitants of regional customs, characteristics, food and above everything pride. They cannot believe, for instance, that to move five miles from Devon into Cornwall is to go into a country where the older inhabitants regard themselves as of a race quite separate from the English; but it is dimly recognised that as in their own national experience there is here an indefinable division between the people of the North and of the South. This division leads quite naturally to a tension which is evidenced at its worst in a kind of parochialism and at its more apparent in a spirit of competition rather in the manner of the game of Snap.

From time to time in every field of human activity a moment of assessment occurs, a time of counting blessings, and this is particularly necessary where the art of a country is concerned since, acting like a litmus paper, it gauges the colour of life. This is true not only of life as it is but of life as it will be since only the creative artist is prophetically attuned to this future while the lay brethren trail along many years behind in their appreciation, faint, often resentful of the effort, but on the whole pursuing. Group exhibitions are a manifestation of this tendency to add up and pigeonhole in the record of art history, and where a group is large enough and is designed to draw on the whole of an important part of this country a fairly clear view of the region's achievement should emerge.

In this exhibition a reasonably wide net has been cast to catch a number of living artists who can be said to have added lustre to the cultural heritage of their native counties in that part of England whose beginnings in terms of a southern border are never quite defined in our consciousness but whose sum is vaguely called the North. Cries will be heard that there have been omissions, and questions asked why, but the answer is clear: the North has produced, and is producing, so many artists and sculptors who measure up to a high standard that they cannot all be contained in one exhibition of manageable size, and a selection, perhaps arbitrary, has had to be made to keep the thing within bounds.

Where sculptors are concerned the North has it 'over' the South to a marked degree. Any region giving birth to a Henry Moore is entitled to feel a glow of complacency; and if he stands head and shoulders above the others, there still remain further laurels on which the North may rest, other sculptors who have achieved an international reputation and have won for this country a name in sculpture which it had once before, and lost, some time in the middle ages.

In painting there is no such obvious Northern ascendancy. Among the older artists Matthew Smith and Lowry would of course be notable in any part of the world. The younger generation, at least those of it who have succumbed to transatlantic influence, have become so international in outlook that no native flavour attaches to them and it hardly seems to matter if they were born in Wigan or Tierra del Fuego. Nevertheless it is perhaps no accident, but an aspect of evolution, that some of the best English non-figurative painters, temporarily deflected from their true course though some may be by alien formulae, draw their inspiration quite clearly from those two extremes, the North and the far South-West, where the bones of the land are disturbingly near the surface and there is no hiding under a distracting luxuriance of ordered tree and flower. In the North artists have as well another indigenous aid – although it takes a painter's eye to see its merits – the enormous dun-grey industrial sprawl. Smoke, rain, the wastes of raped and exhausted land, the grim, looming factories like mausoleums enclosing and crushing the bones of the people; from all this mass of sordid detail emanates intangibly in certain lights an unforgettable bloom of power and beauty. It is not surprising that in these circumstances so many younger painters have abandoned realism, which was the expression natural to the older artists living in a more settled society, and have attempted to

interpret the essence in abstract terms; and shocked and bewildered though the public may be when faced by the non-figurative work of Trevor Bell, Mackenzie, Ballard and others, they have got to realise that it is useless any longer to expect reason in art since any true artist, while pointing the way ahead, must also reflect the spirit of his time, which at the moment, perhaps unfortunately, is chaotic, amoral and undisciplined. Failing reason as an approach to painting – and this literary approach is the bane of the English – there remain the emotions; and we are dead indeed who cannot feel some inner stirring of pleasure when looking at a kind of painting, of which this exhibition provides not a few, wherein the paint is succulent, the colour richly evocative and an imagination has abandoned association and logic in favour of flight into an element which we must try and understand as well as feel, or else have levelled at us Leonardo da Vinci's accusation that we are 'merely passages for food'.

No attempt has been made in this exhibition to pit the old against the new or, in the battle of realism versus abstraction, to favour one camp at the expense of the other: it is simply a survey in miniature of some of the 20th century achievements of the North in the field of the visual arts. It is by no means comprehensive and, as a target, wide open to the slings and arrows attendant on an exhibition governed by personal choice. Nevertheless it is hoped that this modest hymn in praise of the art of the North will not go altogether unappreciated and unsung.

All paintings, unless otherwise described, are in oil on canvas, and have been lent by the artists.

ARMITAGE, KENNETH

Born in Leeds 1916.
Slade School of Art, London, 1937–39.

Numerous one-man shows, notably Gimpel Fils, London, 1952 and 1957; Paul Rosenberg, New York 1958; Venice Biennale 1958; Kunsthaus, Zurich 1959; Boymans Museum, Rotterdam, 1959. Has also shown in numerous international exhibitions.

Lives in London.

1 Figure lying on its Side IV. 1957
Bronze. 46½ in. long

ASPINALL, NORMAN

Born at Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire, 1929.
Ashton School of Art and Manchester College of Art.

One-man show at the Crane Kalman Gallery, London, 1959.

Lives at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

2 Figure falling on its Side
Concrete. 23 in. long

BALLARD, ARTHUR

Born in Liverpool 1915.
Liverpool School of Art and Grande Chaumière, Paris.

One-man shows at Manchester University 1958, Liverpool University 1958, Roland, Browse and Delbanco, London 1958.

Lives at Hoylake, Cheshire.

3 Painting. 1959
Board. 46 × 34¼ in.

4 Painting. 1959
Board. 28¼ × 46¼ in.

5 Painting. 1960
Board. 46¼ × 28 in.

6 Painting. 1960
Board. 60 × 46¼ in.

BELL, TREVOR

Born 1930.
Leeds College of Art 1947–52 and Harrogate School of Art 1953–55.

One-man shows Waddington Galleries, London, 1958, 1960.

Lives at St Ives, Cornwall.

7 Earth. 1959
36 × 36 in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

8 Across the Piazza. 1959 (*Plate V*)
72 × 48 in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

9 Heightened Ochre. 1959
48 × 36 in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

BROWN, RALPH

Born in Leeds 1928.
Studied at Leeds, Hammersmith, the Royal College of Art, and in Paris under Zadkine.

Has exhibited at Roland, Browse & Delbanco and Gimpel Fils, London.

Lives in Hertfordshire.

10 Flying. 1960
Resin and fibreglass. 54 in. high

EURICH, RICHARD, RA

Born in Bradford 1903.
Bradford School of Art and the Slade School of Art, London.

Sixteen one-man shows at the Redfern Gallery, London.

11 From the Walls, York. 1954
25 × 30 in.
Lent by the Redfern Gallery, London

12 Leaving Port. 1955
25 × 30 in.
Lent by the Redfern Gallery, London

13 Rouen. 1956
20 × 40 in.
Lent by the Redfern Gallery, London

FELL, SHEILA

Born in Aspatria, Cumberland, 1931.
Carlisle School of Art and St Martin's School of Art, London.

One-man shows at the Beaux Arts Gallery, London, 1955, 1958 and 1960.

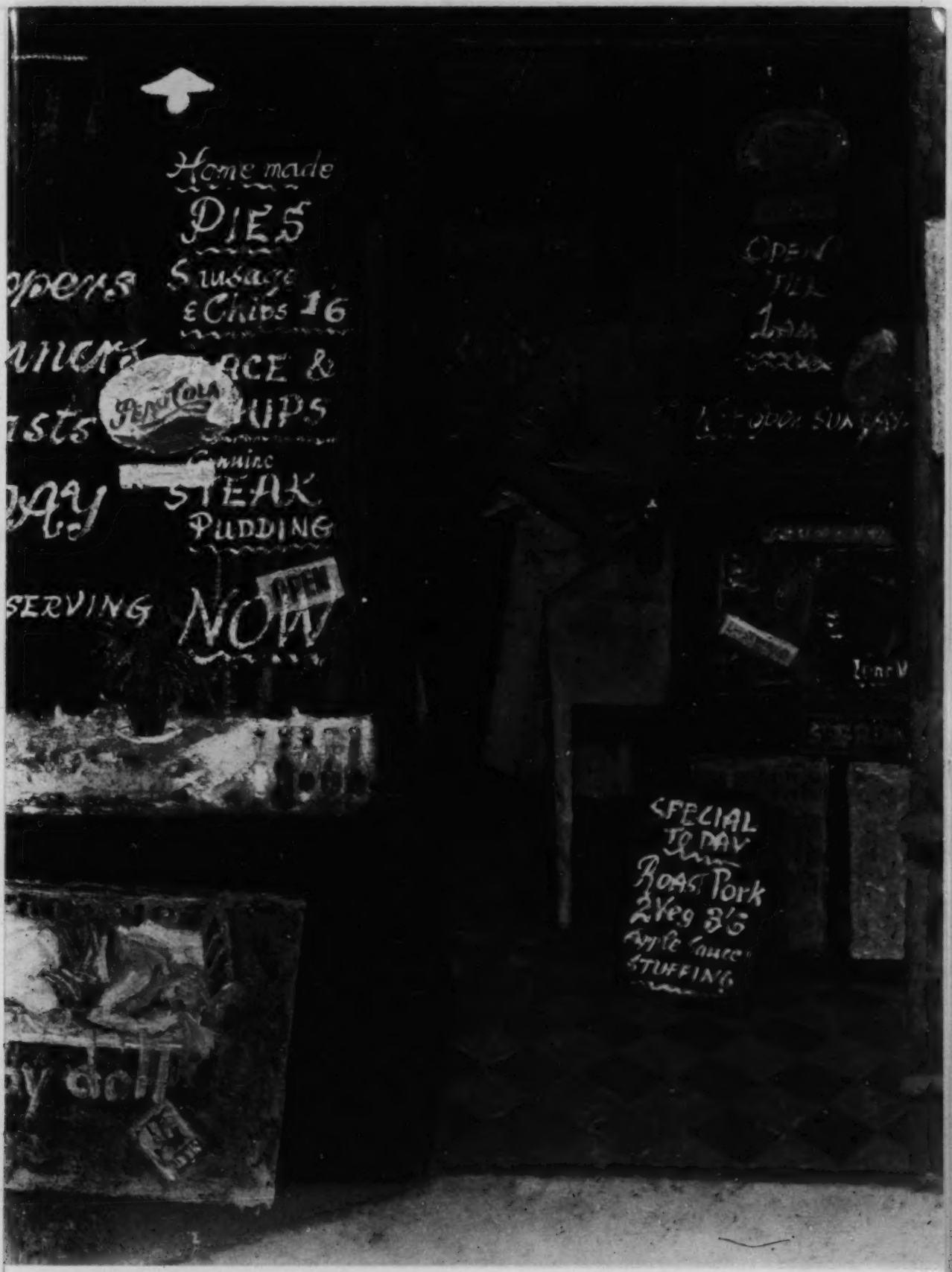
Lives in London.

14 Woman in a Cornfield. 1959
50 × 40 in.

15 Aspatria under Snow. 1960
40 × 50 in.

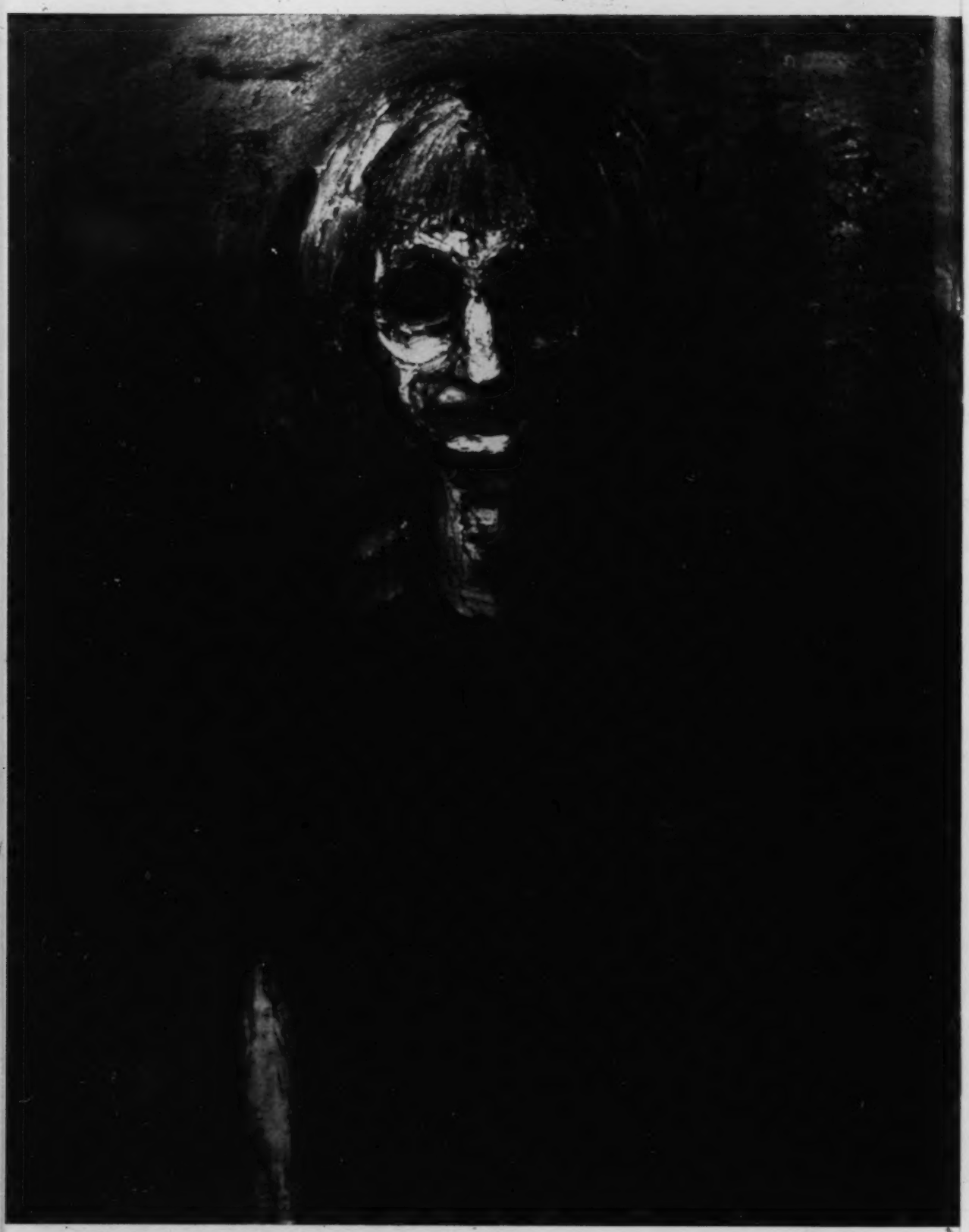
16 Path to a Farm. 1960
50 × 40 in.

17 Potato Pickers I. 1960 (*Plate III*)
50 × 40 in.
Lent by the Arts Council of Great Britain



James Fitton
Café near the Elephant (18)

Plate I

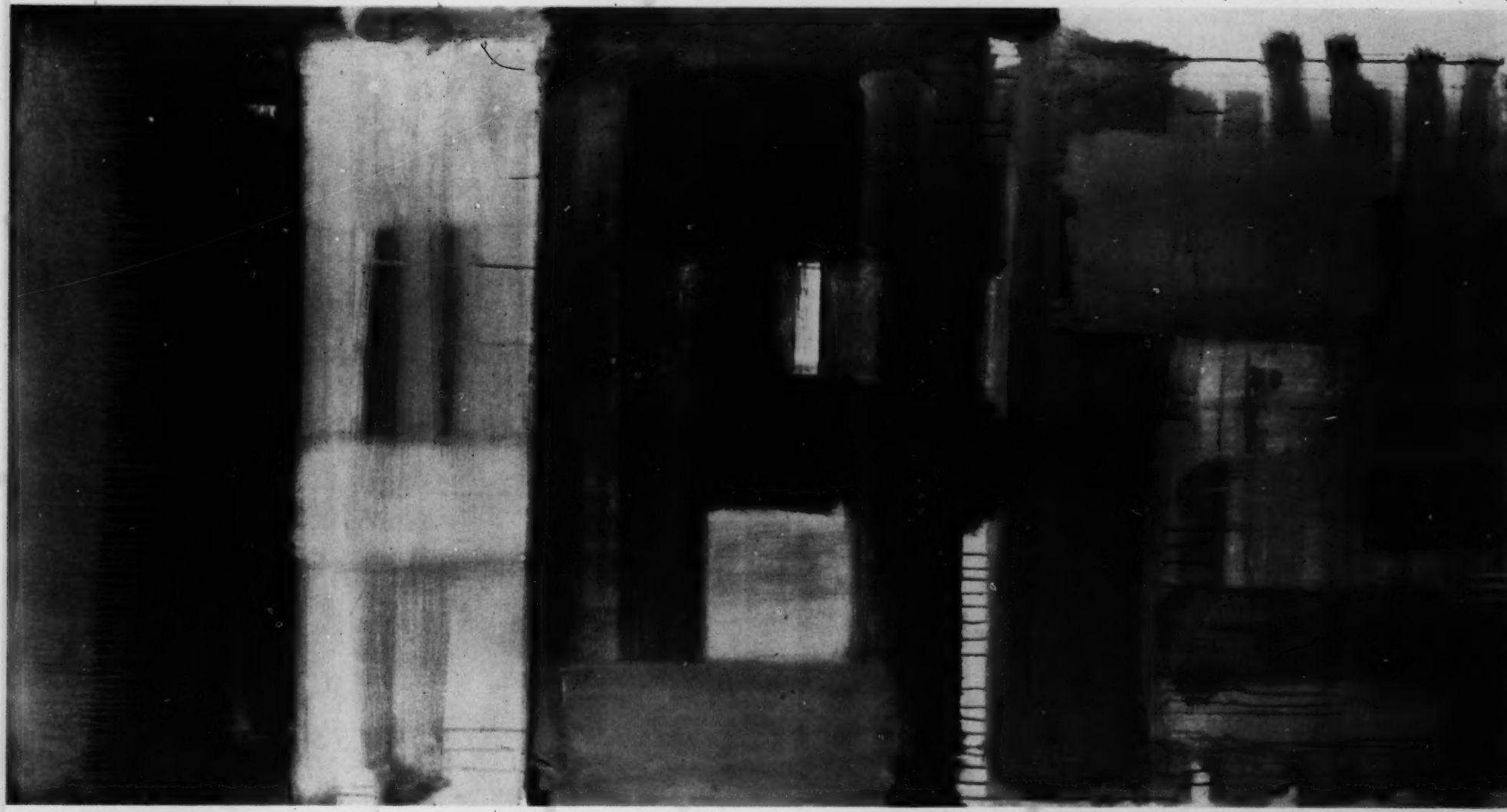


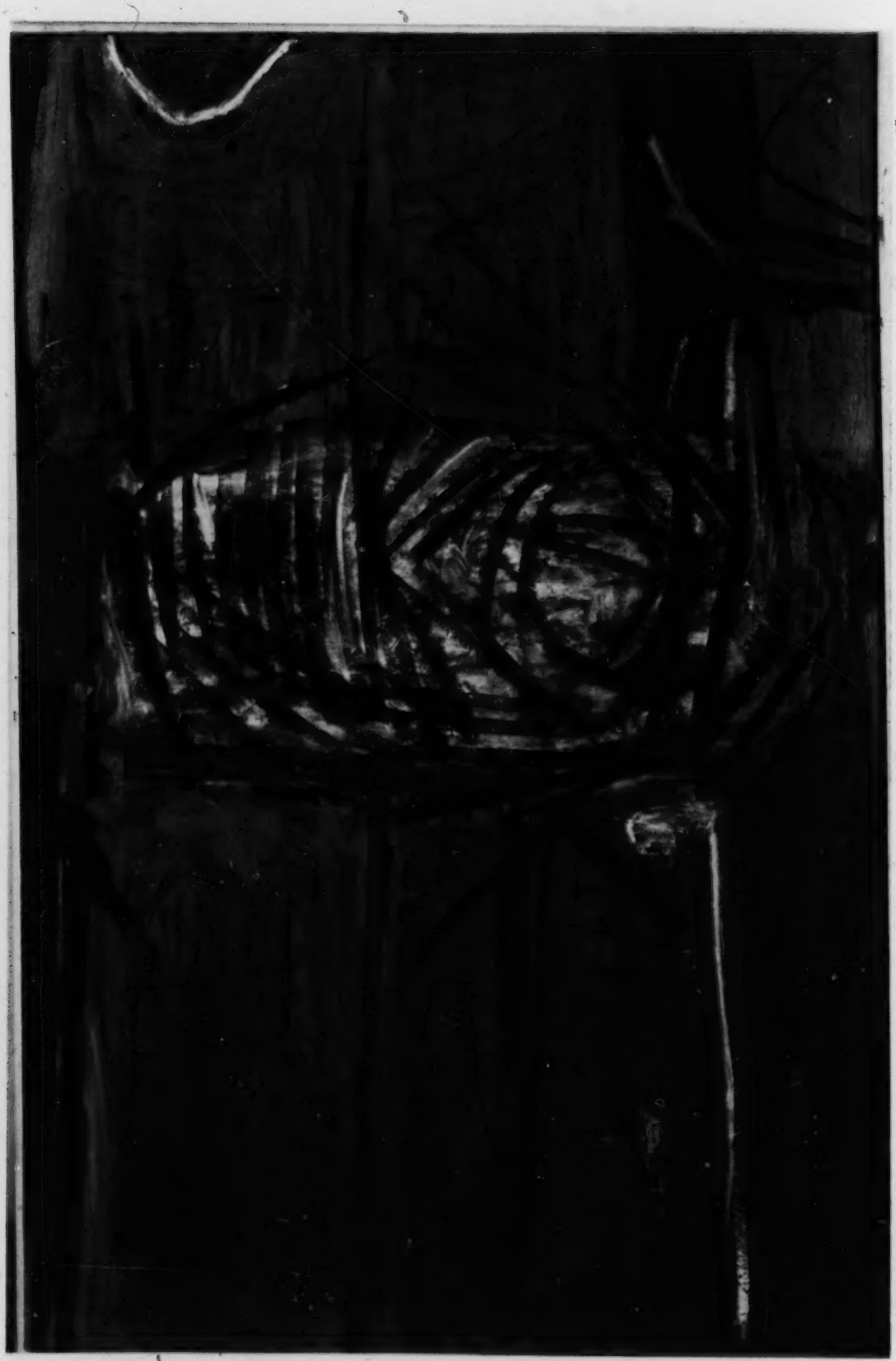
Theodore Major
Old Woman from Wigan (50)

Plate II

Plate III

Sheila Fell
Potato Pickers I (17)





Trevor Bell
Across the Piazza (8)

Plate V

◀ Patrick Heron
June Horizon (28)

Plate IV

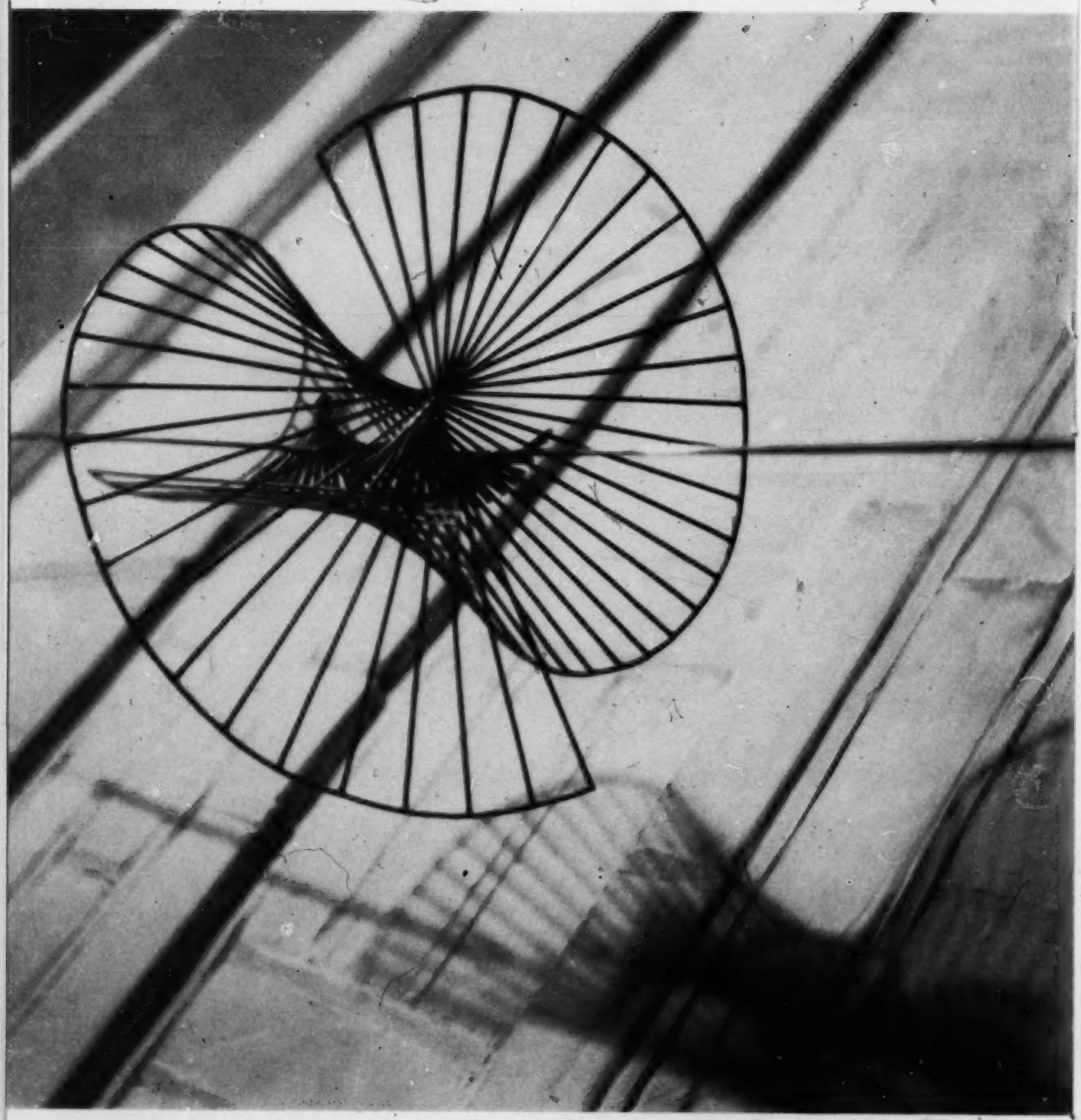


Plate VI

Kenneth Martin
Screw Mobile (54)

Henry Moore
Upright external / internal forms (55) ▶

Plate VII

Plate VIII

Henry Moore
Draped reclining figure (56)

FITTON, JAMES, RA

Born in Oldham 1899.
Studied in Manchester and London.

Lives in Dulwich.

18 Café near the Elephant (*Plate I*)
30 × 23 in.

19 Kitchen Range
26 × 24 in.

20 Jardinière
48 × 35 in.

21 Self Portrait. 1957
39 × 24 in.

FULLARD, GEORGE

Born in Sheffield 1924.
Sheffield College of Art and Royal College of Art, London.

One-man show Woodstock Gallery, 1958.

Lives in London.

22 Infant with Flower. 1958
Bronze. 31 in. high

GREAVES, DERRICK

Born in Sheffield 1927.
Royal College of Art, London.

One-man shows at Beaux Arts Gallery, London, 1953 and 1955. Zwemmer Gallery, London, 1958. Venice Biennale 1956.

Lives at Woburn, Buckinghamshire.

23 Flowers on Newspaper. 1959
24 × 36 in.

24 Bouquet. 1959
30 × 25¼ in.

25 Male Figure. 1959
66 × 140 in.

HEPWORTH, BARBARA, CBE

Born in Wakefield 1903.
Royal College of Art, London; also studied in Florence and Rome.

One-man shows at Beaux Arts Gallery, London, 1928. Lefèvre Gallery, London, 1933–55; Gimpel Fils, London, 1956 and 1958. Retrospective exhibitions: Venice Biennale 1950; Whitechapel Art Gallery 1954; U.S.A. 1955–57. Sao Paolo Biennale 1959.

Lives at St Ives, Cornwall.

26 Torso (torcella). 1958
Bronze. 34½ in. high

27 Figure (coré). 1960
Bronze. 29½ in. high

HERON, PATRICK

Born in Leeds 1920.

Seven one-man shows at Redfern Gallery, London, and one-man show Bertha Schaefer Gallery, New York. Has exhibited in Paris, Sao Paulo, Norway, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, etc.

Lives at Zennor, Cornwall.

28 June Horizon. 1957 (*Plate IV*)
72 × 36 in.

29 Red Sea. June 1957 - February 1958
48 × 30 in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

30 Blue Night. 1959
Paper. 27½ × 17½ in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

31 Dusty Black, Browns and Greens. 1959
Paper. 27½ × 17½ in.
Lent by the Waddington Galleries, London

KAY, BERNARD

Born in Southport, Lancashire, 1927.
Liverpool College of Art and the Royal Academy Schools, London.

One-man show, Roland, Browse & Delbanco, London, 1959.
Lives in London.

32 Green Stop. 1958
48 × 48 in.

33 Blue Psalm. 1958
40 × 32 in.

34 Through Yellow. 1958
36 × 26 in.

35 Moon Pull Pale Blue. 1958
48 × 60 in.

LAMB, HENRY, RA

Born at Adelaide 1885; brought up in Manchester.

Painted until 1911 in France.
Several one-man shows at the Leicester Galleries, London.

Lives in London.

36 Portrait of a Girl. 1911
51 × 32 in.
Lent by Southampton Art Gallery

37. The Lake
24 × 18 in.
Lent by the Hon. Robert Gathorne-Hardy

LOWNDES, ALAN

Born in Stockport 1921.
Studied only at night school.

One-man shows at Prospect Gallery, London, 1956, and Crane Kalman Gallery, London, 1958.

Lives in Lancashire or Cornwall.

38 Bennet's Corner. 1956
32¼ × 48¼ in.

39 Majorcan Church. 1959
20 × 18¼ in.

40 Great Portwood Street. 1960
24 × 30 in.

41 The Lioness Tamer. 1960
29 × 40 in.

LOWRY, L. S., ARA

Born in Old Trafford 1887.
Manchester School of Art and Salford Technical College.

One-man shows at Lefèvre Gallery 1939 and at intervals since then. Retrospective exhibitions at Salford Art Gallery 1941 and 1951 and Manchester City Art Gallery 1959.

Lives at Mottram-in-Longdendale, Cheshire.

42 The Black Tower. 1938
24 × 19½ in.
Lent by Eric Newton, Esq.

43 A Lake. 1945
16 × 20 in.
Lent by the Piccadilly Gallery, London

44 Good Friday, Daisy Nook. 1946
30 × 40 in.
Lent by Dr A. W. Laing

45 Monday Morning. 1946
Wood. 20 × 10 in.
Lent by the Borough of Rugby

MACKENZIE, ALEXANDER

Born in Liverpool 1923.
Liverpool School of Art 1947–50.

One-man show at Waddington Galleries, London, 1959 and at Durlacher's, New York, 1960.

Lives at Newlyn, Cornwall.

46 Nanjizal. 1959
23 × 36¾ in.

47 Manhattan Island. 1960
Paper. 19½ × 12 in.

48 The Levant, Zawn. 1960
24 × 30 in.

49 Snow Continent. 1960
Paper. 20 × 13½ in.

MAJOR, THEODORE

Born in Wigan 1908.
Wigan School of Art and Liverpool School of Art.

Arts Council touring exhibition 1953. 'Two Lancashire Painters' (with L. S. Lowry) 1951.

Lives at Appley Bridge, Lancashire.

50 Old Woman from Wigan (*Plate II*)
Board. 30 × 25 in.

51 Old Man Ascending Stairs
Board. 30 × 25 in.

52 The Fisherman
30 × 37 in.

53 Lancashire Coast
30 × 37 in.

MARTIN, KENNETH

Born in Sheffield 1905.
Sheffield School of Art and the Royal College of Art, London.

One-man shows at the Leicester Galleries 1943 and 1946. Institute of Contemporary Arts 1960 and in mixed exhibitions in U.S.A., France, Switzerland, etc.

Lives in London.

54 Screw Mobile. 1955 (*Plate VI*)
Phosphor bronze. 36 in. high

MOORE, HENRY, C.H.

Born at Castleford 1898.
Leeds College of Art and the Royal College of Art, London.

Numerous one-man shows in Britain, U.S.A., France, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, etc., from 1928. Retrospective exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York 1946; Tate Gallery 1951; Hamburg 1960.

Lives at Much Hadham, Hertfordshire.

55 Upright external / internal forms. 1951 (*Plate VII*)
Bronze. 24½ in. high
Lent by Mrs Irina Moore

56 Draped reclining Figure. 1957 (*Plate VIII*)
Bronze. 29 in. long
Lent by Miss Mary Moore

57 Seated Figure against a curved Wall. 1959
Bronze. 36¼ in. wide
Lent by the Arts Council of Great Britain

PITCHFORTH, R. V., RA

Born in Wakefield 1895.
Wakefield and Leeds Schools of Art and the Royal College of Art, London.

One-man shows at Léger, Lefèvre, Redfern and Wildenstein Galleries, London, and Leicester Galleries, London, 1954 and 1957; also in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Lives in London.

58 Dieppe Harbour at Night
24 × 20 in.
Lent by the City Art Gallery, Bristol

59 Road Transport
19 × 29 in.
Lent by the Tate Gallery, London

60 Hebden, Yorkshire
24¼ × 29¾ in.
Lent by the Manchester City Art Galleries

SMITH, JACK

Born in Sheffield 1926.
Sheffield College of Art, St Martin's School of Art, London, and the Royal College of Art, London.

Seven one-man shows at Beaux Arts Gallery, London; Catherine Viviano Gallery, New York, 1958; retrospective exhibition Whitechapel Art Gallery, 1959.

Lives in London.

61 Object on a Table. 1959
48 × 48 in.

62 Bottles and Water Jug in Shadow. 1959
35 × 31½ in.

63 Dark Still Life I. 1959
48 × 48 in.

64 Still Life. 1959
36 × 36 in.

SMITH, SIR MATTHEW, CBE

Born in Halifax 1879; died 1959.
Manchester School of Art and Slade School of Art, London.

Numerous one-man exhibitions, notably at the Mayor Gallery, Tooth's and Lefèvre, London. Venice Biennale 1938 and 1950. Tate Gallery 1953; Royal Academy 1960.

65 Nude. 1924
18 × 25 in.
Lent by Eugene Rosenberg, Esq.

66 Golden Rod and Lilies. c.1928
25 × 19 in.
Lent by the City Art Gallery, Leeds

67 Lilies and Delphinium. 1929-30
22 × 26 in.
Lent by Benn W. Levy, Esq., M.B.E.

WRIGHT, AUSTIN

Born in Chester 1911.
Studied privately.

One-man shows Roland, Browse & Delbanco, London, 1955 and 1957. Sao Paulo Biennale 1957. Holland Park, London (L.C.C.) 1957. Arts Council, Open Air Sculpture 1955 and 1957, etc.

Lives near York.

68 Labourer. 1955
Lead. 9 in. high

Some of the works exhibited are for sale; application should be made to the catalogue desk.